

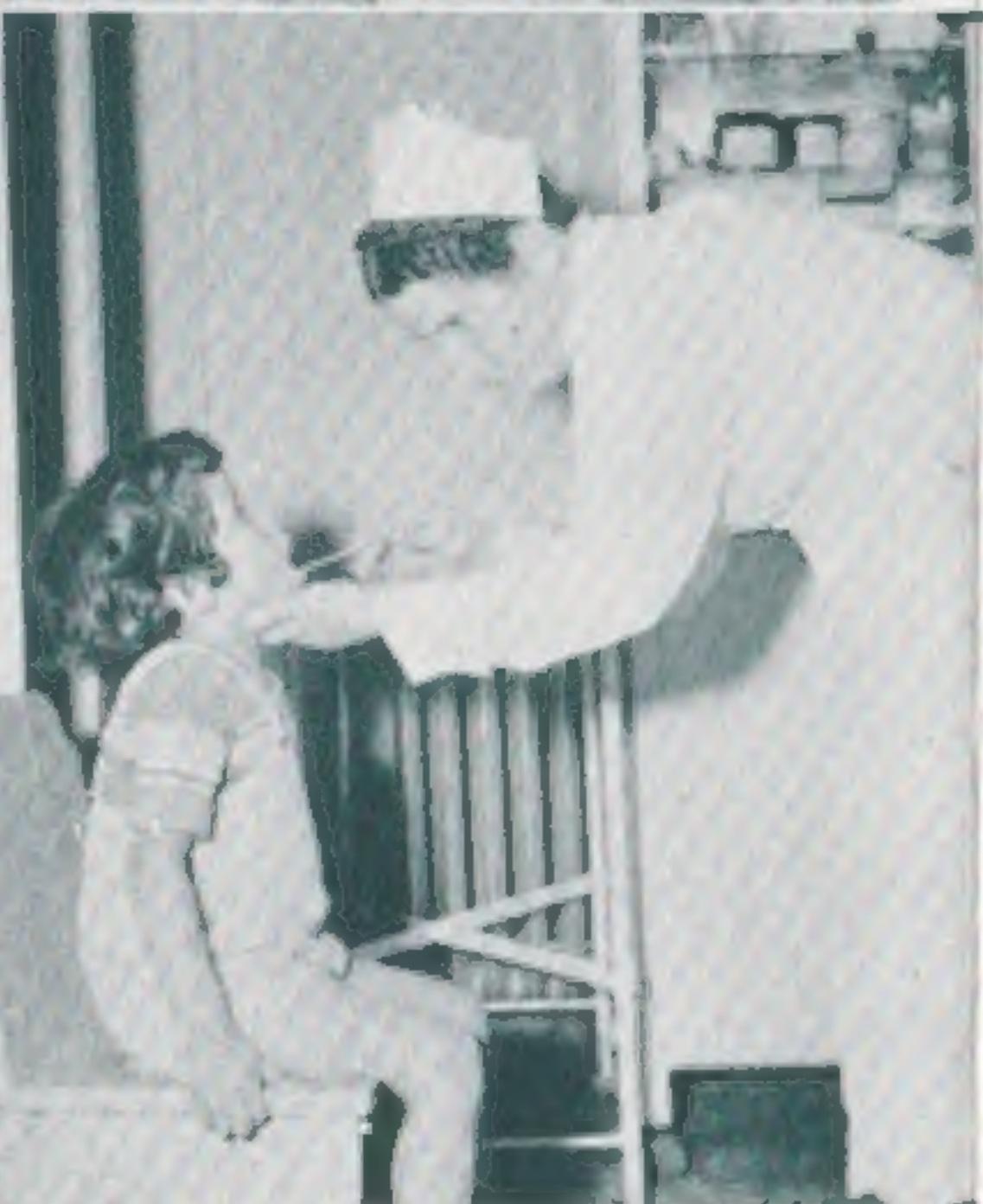


# INDIANS

*Today*



Brotherhood of St. Andrew operates refreshment stand during anniversary celebration on South Dakota reservation



A Navajo catechist's wife is expert in tribe's ancient weaving craft



Indian Missions, as in Arizona, take a lively interest in nurturing healthy bodies

**W**HOM IS AN INDIAN? FOR MANY AMERICANS, THE Indians are the painted, head-dressed, and moccasined dancers seen in a southwestern resort town or the hard riding, shouting braves of the western movies, or the beaded and feathered attractions seen at rodeos. But the real Indian is none of these. Rather he is the one who can rightfully and proudly claim the title: *The first American.*

Most of his fellow countrymen prefer to forget the Indian chapter in American history for it is not one that can be read with any degree of pride. It is easier to forget that the Indians were the original inhabitants of this land and became the dispossessed people after the white man came.

The Indian reservation, isolated and remote from other spheres of American life, does not loudly proclaim its limitations, its poverty, its disease, and, indeed, its lack of reserve. On these reservations the Indians became a nation within a nation but without the rights and responsibilities that go with citizenship. It was not until 1924 that they were granted full citizenship in the United States and permitted to leave and return to the reservation as they pleased.

The isolation of reservation living gave the Indians and whites little opportunity for contact except for two important and powerful influences: Government and the Church. Of these two, the Church is the older since missionaries worked with Indians long before this country had a government. The Church's influence far exceeds its numerical membership for it has been and still is a pioneering agency among the

Indians, in education, in health, in social services, in bridging racial and tribal barriers, and in bringing the news of God's love to a forgotten and neglected people.

Someone once said, "It is doubtful if any race ever has passed through such a succession of life-changing experiences as have the American Indians in the past three hundred years." The Church has worked to help the Indians in the many adjustments, changes, and transitions that they have made and have yet to make . . .

### **One Mission or a Hundred**

THE Episcopal Church today has established work in fifteen dioceses and missionary districts among eighteen Indian tribes. The extent of the work in any one jurisdiction varies from those which have only one or two missions, as in Sacramento, Western New York, or South Florida, up to South Dakota with its hundred chapels, thirty clergy, and many lay workers. Work is also carried on among the Indians in Arizona, Central New York, Fond du Lac, Idaho, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

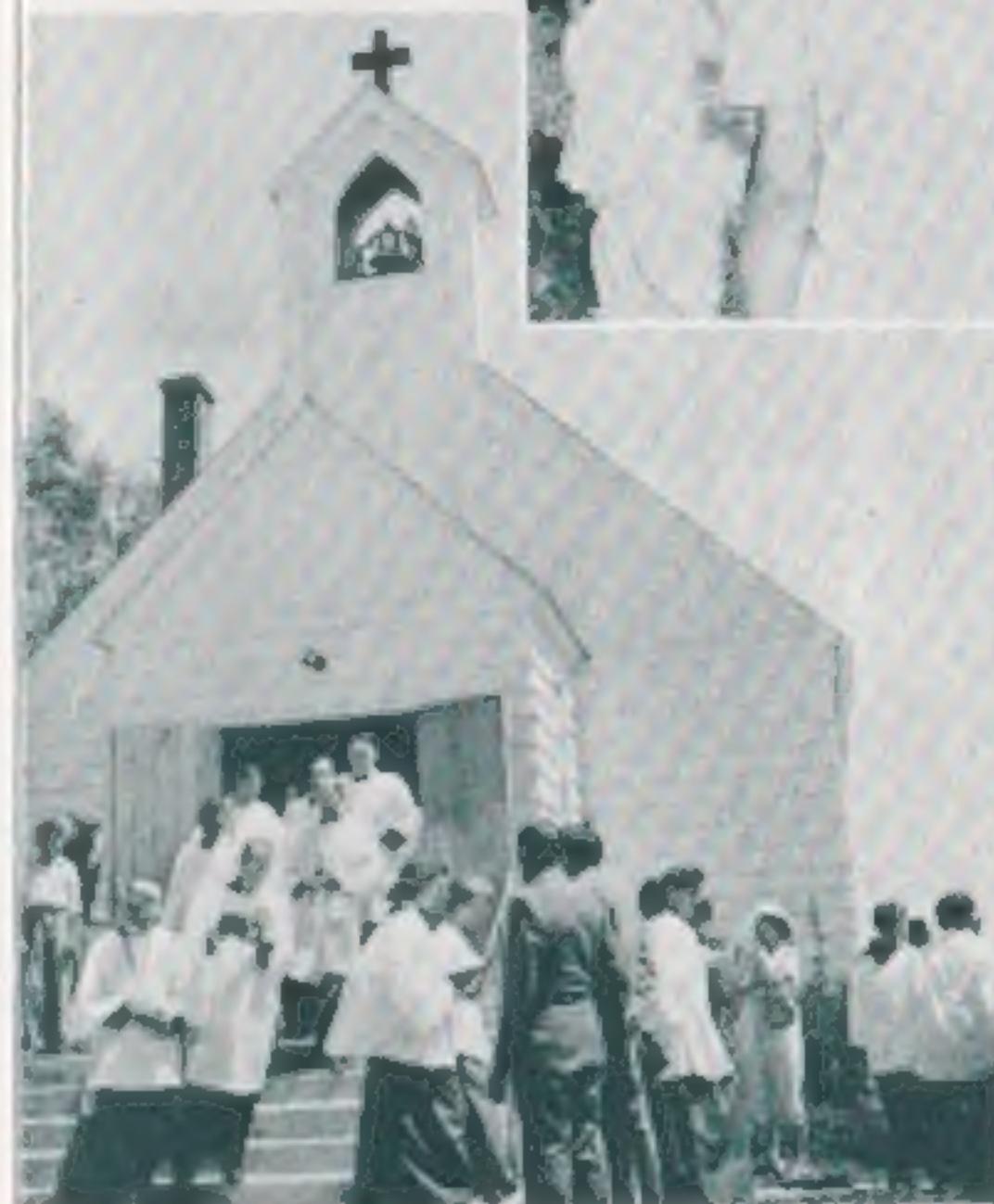
### **The Neediest Tribal Group**

THE number of Indians in the United States is increasing and with the increase their problems become more acute. There are about 400,000 Indians in this country today. The largest tribal group and perhaps the neediest is the 61,000 Navajos on the reservation of twenty-five thousand square miles, mostly in Arizona and New

Vacation Bible schools are popular with Indian boys and girls, too



The simple white chapel long has been the center of Dakota reservation community life



Bishop's Day in Utah brings Indians together for Confirmation and Holy Eucharist





Niobrara Convocation is historic annual gathering of South Dakota's Indian Churchmen

Mexico but reaching into Utah and Colorado. More than eighty per cent of them cannot read or write and schools are available for only a third of the thousands of children. Frequently the sick are not cared for and trachoma, tuberculosis, and other diseases are rampant in some areas. Among these people the Episcopal Church has established several missions, the Good Shepherd Mission, Fort Defiance, Arizona, being perhaps the best known. Here evangelistic work is done, orphans are given a home, children are taught, and the sick brought back to health. The Church ministers not just to the spiritual needs but to the whole man.

Another vital ministry to the Indians is in South Dakota where the Dakota Indians receive the Church's services and sacraments, education, and social services through the Niobrara Dean-

ery which covers not only South Dakota but also parts of Nebraska. The Church is also at work among the Havasupai Indians in Arizona, the Oneida in Fond du Lac, the Shoshone in Idaho, Minnesota's Chippewa tribe, the Paiute in Nevada, the Sioux, Cree, and Chippewa tribes in North Dakota; the Utes in Utah; and the Arapaho and Shoshones in Wyoming.

#### ***Indians Come to the City***

SINCE World War II there has been an influx of Indians into urban life in this country. The many Indian men who served in the Armed Forces and the Indian women who went into war industry work were reluctant to return to reservation living and understandably so for opportunities are decidedly limited. Although they have met many barriers in the city, the vividness of

the dirt, disease, and futility of reservation living is always in their memories.

To Rapid City, S. D., for example, have come thousands of South Dakota Indians. Many of them live in shacks and tents, employment opportunities are scarce, and they are barred from many social activities in the town. The Church has followed them and is ministering to them.

In Minneapolis and St. Paul, the Diocese of Minnesota and the National Council of Churches of Christ have worked together to help the Indian in his integration into urban life. Through the American Indians, Inc., the Church is promoting the well-being of individual Indians, encouraging them to make use of the various agencies and organizations in the community, and, most important, giving them a spiritual home where they can turn for aid and advice.

This chapter in Indian history is a new one and presents a multitude of challenges and problems. The Indian's role, however, is the same, for they are still in a state of flux and change, unsettled and insecure, a people in transition.

The Indian is not nor does he want to be the Indian who does war dances for tourists. He wants what all Americans want, the right and opportunity to be an integrated and fully-accepted citizen. The Indians in transition need the Church. It must not desert those who remain on the reservations and cling to the old culture and way of life. Nor can it desert the youth who are seeking to be an integral part of this land.



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